

BOSTON ABLAZE.

A City in Sackcloth and Ashes.

Two Hundred and Fifty Millions Dissolved in Fire and Smoke.

Twenty Weary Hours of Trial and Suffering.

"Millions of Fiery Sparks Studding the Black Brow of Night."

AN AREA OF TWO HUNDRED ACRES BURNED OVER.

Fighting the Fire Fiend with Powder.

Splendid Blocks of Buildings Blown Up.

Irresistible March of the Conflagration.

Terrible Scenes of Crazy and Distraction.

THE FIRE DEPARTMENT PARALYZED.

Engines Without Horses and Men Without Heads.

Worcester Sends Help—Forty-four Miles in Forty-five Minutes.

SATURNALIA OF A WORLD OF THIEVES.

A Vigilance Committee Organized and Active.

United States Soldiers and Marines Patrol the Streets.

Total Destruction of Granite and Everett Blocks.

Stone Walls and Iron Doors Melt in the Fierce Heat.

The Old South Church—Heroic Struggle to Save the Ancient Landmark—Fifty Streams of Water Fighting For Its Existence.

"God Bless the Firemen!" Cry the Crowd.

Winthrop and Franklin Squares Destroyed.

The Great Centres of Wholesale Trade Blotted Out.

Granite Front of the New Post Office Crumbled Into Dust.

The Millionaire and Mendicant On a Level.

The Multitude Bravely Shout, "Boston Shall Be Rebuilt!"

MEETINGS OF SYMPATHY CALLED.

The Common Heart of Humanity Again Stirred.

Action of the Mayor, Council and Aldermen.

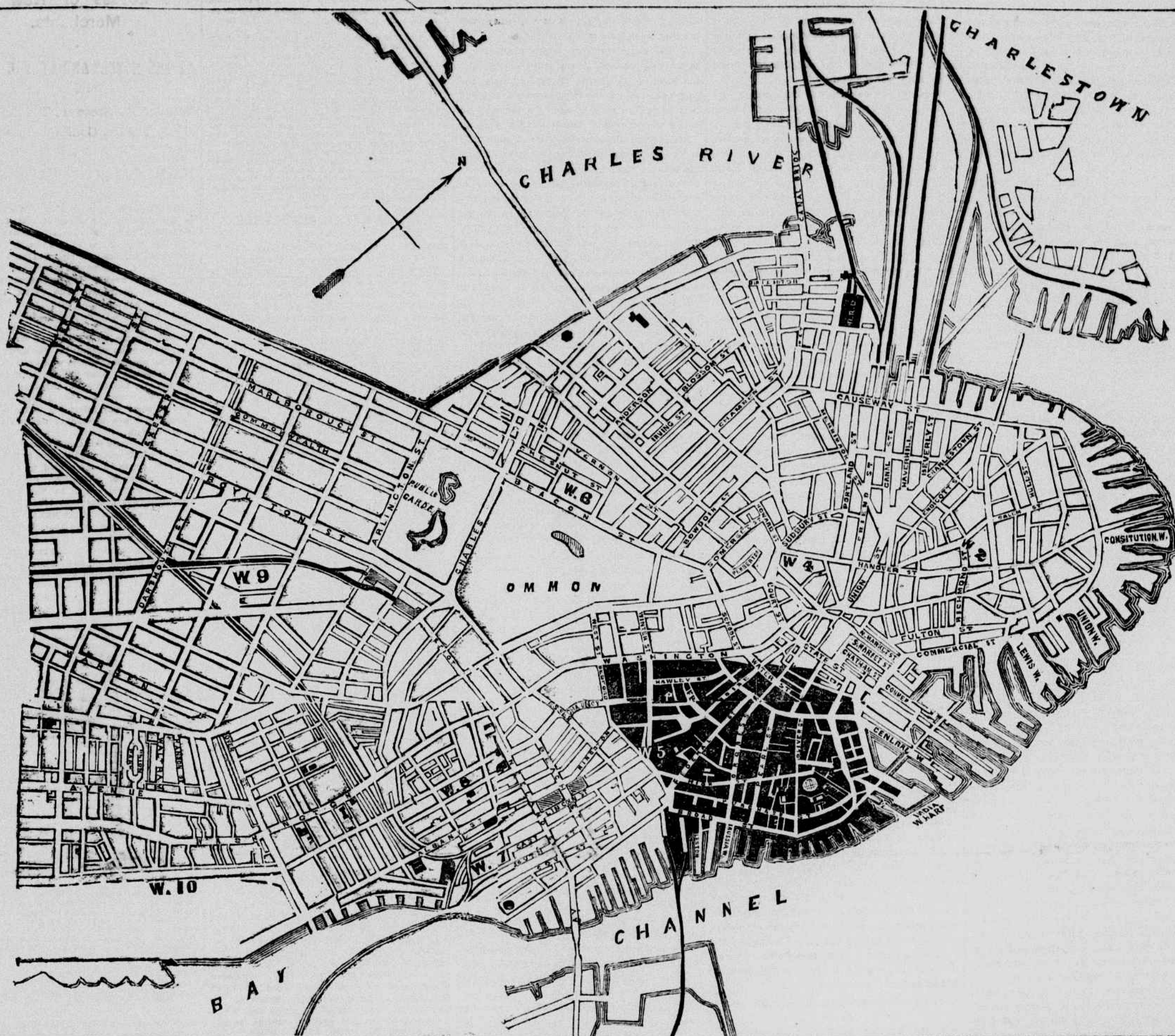
RELIEF COMMITTEE ORGANIZED.

Immediate Assistance To Be Afforded the Sufferers.

The terrible record we present our readers to-day of the fire which commenced at a quarter-past seven Saturday night and was

MAP OF THE BURNED DISTRICT.

Two Hundred Acres of Buildings Destroyed—Loss Two Hundred and Fifty Millions of Dollars.



brought under at three P. M. yesterday, and laid waste the oldest and wealthiest part of the city of Boston, will be read with a thrill of painful concern over the entire civilized world. To the city of New York the awful fate that has overtaken the capital of New England has an especial and momentous interest. United closely by ties of a social and commercial character, whatever affects our sister city of Boston has more or less of import for us. Over two hundred acres of the substantial class of buildings have been utterly destroyed. Neither iron nor granite could withstand the fierce sweep of the fire. It smote down walls such as might have defied the ravages of time for ages. Iron melted like wax before the all-devouring flame, and the efforts of the firemen were as fruitless and impotent as an attempt to balk the flowing of the tides. In the general wreck the Boston people have one consoling thought—that their most sacred and venerable landmark, the Old South Church, is saved—saved by the superhuman exertions of the firemen, amid cries from the anxious multitude of "God bless the firemen!"

The granite front of the new Post Office crumbled down like gingerbread in the face of the conflagration. Finally, after twenty hours of weary toil and suffering, the fire was subdued, chiefly through the summary process of blowing up the buildings that lay within its all-destroying sweep.

DETAILS OF THE CALAMITY.

Boston, Nov. 10, 1872.
Boston has been visited by a terrible calamity. Before it pales into insignificance any and all events which have transpired in this vicinity for years, and the results thereof will take months to overcome. Statistically speaking, nearly the whole of the principal business portion of the city is in ashes. The main thoroughfare between North and South End is piled up with rubbish; Franklin, Hawley, Otis, Arch and Matthews streets and Morton place are things of the past, and there is but seven buildings left standing on the east side of Washington street, between Milk and Summer, and very few on either Pearl, High, Water and Devonshire streets. The district burned over by the fire is bounded by Summer, Washington, Milk, Congress, Water, Kibby and half of Central street, proceeding therefrom in nearly a straight line to Broad street, and thence to the Boston, Hartford and Erie Railroad depot. In it are included Otis, Arch, Hawley, Franklin, Devonshire, Matthews, Perkins, Federal,

High, Purchase and Pearl streets, and a large number of alleys and places.

EXTENT AND LOSS.

Its extent is upwards of two hundred acres, and the loss by the devastation of the buildings upon it can fall little short of \$250,000,000. When first discovered, about fifteen minutes past seven o'clock Saturday evening, and before fifty people had reached the deserted streets, the great business centre of the conflagration, large volumes of smoke and crackling flames were bursting out of the rear end of the large five story granite building Nos. 87, 89 and 91 Summer street, directly on the corner of Kingston street. This building was surmounted with a high Mansard, overtopping all the other buildings in that immediate vicinity. Directly as the flames began to spread through the story beneath the roof, and before an engine or hose carriage was on the ground, great volumes of flame suddenly burst out from the rear lower stories of the building, and in less than twenty minutes the whole broad facade, extending fully one hundred feet along Kingston street, was one sheet of livid flame, as was also, at the same time, the Summer street front.

THE HEAT BEING SO INTENSE

as to force the firemen away from that immediate vicinity. By this time a strong wind had been created, the flames began to sweep over Summer and Kingston streets, and despite all the desperate, unremitting and fearless exertions of the firemen in every branch of the department, the fire was communicated to the buildings on the opposite corner of Kingston and Summer streets, as well as to the great block on the corner of Summer and Otis streets, and in less than half an hour thereafter the flames were bursting out of the roofs and all up and down the broad sides of these immense structures. By this time the wind had increased to nearly a gale, and the flames, having the entire mastery of everything, swept from story to story, from roof to roof, from block to block and from corner to corner.

DRIVING THE FIREMEN

from every vantage ground they could secure, and apparently rendering all their exertions useless and futile. Wherever the flames reached they rapidly consumed everything of a combustible character, even melting granite walls, crisping and cracking iron doors and shutters as though they were so much molten lead. The firemen seemed unequal to the emergency, though they worked like heroes, reinforced, as will be stated hereafter, by assistance from abroad. They were unable to procure a stream of water higher than would reach the second stories of the buildings in flames. It would have been useless and foolhardy to attempt to enter any of the stores in the burning district, and the heat prevented a near approach. It was, therefore, necessary to let

THE FIRE FIEND WORK HIS WILL,

for all were powerless to stay his course. Leaving Summer street, after burning both sides as far as Washington street, the flames soon enveloped Win-

throp square and proceeded onward, destroying everything in the path to Milk street. A detour was made on the other side which has laid Franklin street in ashes, and thence up and down Washington street, between Milk and Summer, and from Franklin square on the other side towards High, Pearl, Purchase and Congress streets, and to the water's edge.

The huge granite building which was to have been the new Post Office diverted the flame down Milk street, and away it went through the lower portion of the city. The configuration of the State of Maine, as laid down in modern atlases, very nearly portrays

THE BURNED DISTRICT.

The large block on the corner of Summer and Kingston streets, in which the fire first started, was occupied by Tibbets, Baldwin & Davis, dry goods jobbers. A. R. Young & Co. occupied the third and fourth stories as a manufactory for skirts and corsets, doing a large business and giving employment to about two hundred women; on the second floor Damon, Temple & Co. dealt in fancy goods, furnishing goods, &c. Notwithstanding this great building was in an almost incredible short space of time completely levelled to the ground, its destruction had not progressed far before the flames and sparks which arose from it had lodged upon all the buildings roundabout. Thus the fire spread almost instantly in three directions, first to the adjoining block on Summer street to the opposite block and then across Kingston street in the first-named direction. The adjoining building was occupied by Leland & Wheelock, gentlemen's furnishing goods, and Sawyer, Mansfield & Co., importers of dry goods. The next are Eager, Bartlett & Co., woolen goods; O. B. Northern & Son, hats, caps and furs. Next Farley, Amsden & Co., dry goods jobbers; Rhodes & Ripley, wholesale clothing—the latter firm owned the building. The building opposite

was granite, four stories and a half, occupied largely by Mullen & Elms, dealers in trimmings, who used the entire lower floor. Harding Bros. & Co. and G. L. Ide, Carter & Co., occupied the upper floors. From this building across the square, diagonally, was a stone block, occupied by Smith, Rich & Corson and George M. Glazier, dealers in corsets, skirts and knit goods.

The buildings thus far named were before nine o'clock placed beyond any possible chance of safety, and the firemen left them to burn while they endeavored to check the progress of the mad, devouring element which was making alarmingly rapid strides in all directions.

THE EVERETT GRANITE BLOCK.

On the corner of Otis and Summer streets stood the Everett block, an imposing granite structure, owned by the Everett estate. It included Nos. 52, 54, 56, 58, 60, 62 and 64 Summer street, and was occupied by D. Lyons & Co., Well Brothers & Dreyfus, Phillips & Shuman, C. E. King & Co. and Marr Brothers, dealers in clothing, furnishing goods, fancy goods, trimmings, &c. The upper floors

were used mostly as offices and occupied by various parties. It was about nine o'clock when the flames caught on the top of this building, and upon it the efforts of the engines located in that vicinity were bent. The efforts were unavailing, however, as hardly a drop of water could be got to the top of the building. A line of hose was soon run up on the inside and the hosemen remained as long as they possibly could, striving to check the flames. One fireman was seen clinging on to a covering at the very top of the building, directing a stream on the fire, which was above him and on one side flashing almost in his face. His perilous position excited some alarm, but he stood till the last chance, and then retired in safety. Now the fire began to creep steadily up both sides of Summer street, crawling along from roof to roof as though there was a rivalry between the two sides as to which should outstrip the other in speed. Opposite the Everett block the buildings as they were engulfed in rapid succession were as follows:—Brick swell front, occupied by A. Folsom & Sons, floorcloths and oilcloths; George H. Butler hair goods, and Eugene Chapin, commission merchant. Granite block—Morse, Hammond & Co., hosiery and gloves; Stiles, Deaf & Hower, wholesale clothing; S. Klons & Co., hats, caps and furs; Strecker Brothers, hat and cap manufacturers; Wyman & Arklay, imported goods and linens; Ewing, Wise & Fuller, linens and white goods; Rothwell, Luther, Potter & Co., clothing; Mitchell, Green & Stevens, dry goods. While the fire on the north side of Summer street was marching along on the roof of the Everett block, which had not at this time become largely covered, the fire suddenly burst out in a new and unexpected quarter, leaping across and lighting down on the top of a building on Arch street, a dozen doors removed from Summer street. Almost before the existence of the flames in this quarter was known they had spread down through the building and were bursting in a perfect torrent from all the windows in the front of the fancy goods store of Hawley, Folsom & Martin.

STEAM FIRE ENGINES USELESS.

Several steamers were quickly sent thither, but with no more effect than a single bucketful of water would have produced. The fire spread to each side, enveloping the stores of Thomas Kelley & Co., D. M. Hodgdon, clothing; March Bros., Pierce & Co., Miner, Deaf & Hackett, all of which were quickly blazing.

At ten o'clock the whole roof of the Everett block was a sheet of flame, sending high into the air a column of fire, smoke and lurid sparks. Having thus gained perfect control of the Everett block, the

fire stretched its insatiable arms across the narrow Arch street, and moved rapidly up towards Washington street, taking in the establishments of George H. Lane, Brett & Co., wholesale clothing; E. F. Messenger & Co., dry goods; Edgerton & Gilman, dining rooms; Chaffer & Whitney, sewing silk; Lee, Tweedy & Co., dry goods; Lewis Brown & Co., kid gloves; Marston & Co., com-

mission merchants; Seavey, Foster & Bowman, agents of the Canton Silk Mills; Kettles & Jones, commission merchants; Royce, Tuck & Co., braid and trimmings; Porter Bros., commission merchants; Nicholas & Sons, imitation hair. At the opposite end of Summer street, near the junction of Bedford street, among the

BUILDINGS DESTROYED

were the following:—Hoyer Bros., importers of fancy goods; Gilbert, Lovejoy & Co., woollens (No. 92); John Cotter, hosiery, gloves, &c. (No. 102). Winthrop square, the very centre of the great wholesale trade of the city, embracing some of the most costly mercantile buildings ever erected in this country, and occupied by such great firms as James M. Beebe & Co., Stewart & Co., Anderson, Heath and Co. and forty or fifty others, was before ten o'clock one mass of ruins. On Kingston street, the building next to the one in which the fire started was No. 14, occupied by J. A. Hatch & Co., commission merchants. The next was 16 and 18, occupied on the first floor by Clark and Blodgett, commission merchants, and the second floor by Mellen & Goodwin. The other buildings on Kingston street were dwelling houses and all were destroyed.

THE FLEEING CITIZENS.

About eleven o'clock the scene in Lincoln, Essex, South, Federal and other streets in that immediate neighborhood was one of the greatest of the night. Hundreds of men, women and children were hurrying along laden with every variety of household goods, while scores of carts, wagons, carriages, hand-carts and other vehicles, loaded with heavier articles, were being propelled by the willing hands of the crowd, all seeking some place of safety. Behind them the roaring flames lapped up their houses before they could get half or a quarter of their goods into the street. The large block on the eastern corner of Summer and Lincoln streets burned almost like tinder, and speedily the flames extended down Summer and on both sides of Lincoln street. Albert S. Pratt, dealer in spool cotton, and S. C. Judson & Co., glove manufacturers, were the principal occupants of the building. Lincoln street, as is well known, was lined with tenement houses, and the same was true of South and other streets in that neighborhood. The west side of Federal street, near the Boston, Hartford and Erie Railroad, was occupied by houses, the lower stories of which were generally used for saloons, liquor shops and groceries, while an almost innumerable number of families were stowed away in the rest of the buildings. The other side of the street was occupied by coal and lumber wharves.

ON RUSSIA WHARF

all the buildings which were used by rag, paper and junk merchants were destroyed. There were no vessels lying at this wharf. At Robbin's wharf a schooner was destroyed, as were the coal-sheds and a large quantity of lumber on the pier. The wharf of the Hartford and Erie Railroad Company was burned, and the passenger station of the Corporation, on Broad street, at the foot of Summer street. At eleven o'clock the sparks had come